

SPECIAL REPORT: GERMANY



a 1997 article from *LTW*. "The allocation of licensing rights as a source of finance was not on the agenda for the time being."

Today, all of Germany's national, privately owned broadcasters utilize merchandising as a marketing tool for their programming.

"The licensing industry in the German-speaking territories continues to grow stronger every day, creating an even stronger demand for merchandising product," says Alwin Jeck, head of merchandising at Ravensburger Film + TV. "One of the strengths of this mar-



A jumpsuit featuring Janosch, a character licensed by Bavaria Sonor.

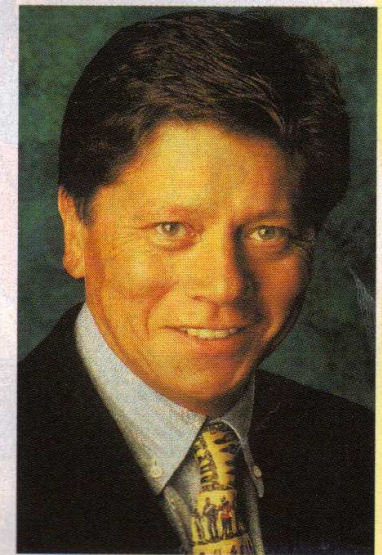
ket, is that media, such as television and publishing, plays a vital role in jump-starting a character's popularity among target groups." For the remainder of the year, Ravensburger will be highlighting Rolf Kauka's Fix & Foxi, as the two characters, created more than 40 years ago, prepare to make their television debut in a series of 26 half-hour episodes in 1999.

The company is also concentrating on Little Bear and Kapt'n

Blaubar (Captain Bluebear).

Unlike licensing in the United States,

which is traditionally characterized by event films, brands, and a number of more recent developments in the areas of "niche" licensing, such as art, food, and museum-based concepts, the focus in the German-speaking territories continues to remain on character-based licenses and well-established properties, billed by some as "classics." Often hesitant to take risks, industry players appear to prefer tried and true classics over newer,



V.I.P.'s Sir Michael Lou.